

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons which follow.

Claims 3 and 21 are currently being amended.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, are presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-21 are now pending in this application.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 3 and 21 are rejected for insufficient antecedent basis. Claims 3 and 21 have been amended to have proper antecedent basis. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1, 4, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,567,894 (Bergman) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,513,406 (Foster et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Bergman and Foster et al. alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest or teach the claimed invention as recited in claims 1, 4, and 6.

Claims 1, 4, and 6 all recite:

a first coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member **configured to** removably **couple** the elongated member **to the magnetic resonance imaging system**; and

a second coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member **configured to** removably **couple** the elongated member **to a second imaging system**.

The Examiner states: “Foster discloses a patient transport system employing first and second docking/coupling systems at the head and foot of the patient transport coupling the patient transport to a plurality of diagnostic and imaging systems (Col. 3-4, lines 34-67 and 1-24).” Applicants respectfully disagree. Foster et al. does not disclose this. Foster et al. only discloses a modular bed retrofit by selecting a “patient transport module” dockable to the head end of the bend and/or a “rollable care cart module” dockable to the foot end of the bed. (See Col. 3, lines 34-42.) Claims 1, 4, and 6 require a first coupling mechanism configured to couple to an MRI system and a second coupling mechanism configured to couple to a second imaging system. Foster et al. does not make any mention or suggestion of coupling a patient transport system to two different imaging systems using two different coupling mechanisms.

Later in the Office Action, the Examiner admits that Foster et al. does not disclose the ability to couple to two imaging systems. “Foster fails to disclose a coupling arrangement on first and second imaging system [sic].” (Office Action, pp. 5, 6.) Bergman also fails to disclose, suggest, or teach a coupling arrangement for coupling to two imaging systems. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1, 4, and 6 cannot be properly maintained. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 2 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bergman in view of Foster et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,490,297 (Bradovich et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Bergman, Foster et al., and Bradovich et al. alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest or teach the claimed invention as recited in claims 2 and 5.

Claims 2 and 5 depend from claim 1. Thus, claims 2 and 5 also recite:

a first coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member **configured to** removably **couple** the elongated member **to the magnetic resonance imaging system**; and

a second coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member **configured to removably couple** the elongated member to a **second imaging system**.

Bradovich et al. does not disclose or suggest a first coupling mechanism configured to couple to an MRI system and a second coupling mechanism configured to couple to a second imaging system. As discussed with respect to claims 1, 4, and 6, Bergman and Foster et al. fail to disclose or suggest these limitations. Accordingly, a rejection of claims 2 and 5 based on Bergman, Foster et al., and Bradovich et al. cannot be properly maintained. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 4 of the Office Action, claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bergman in view of Foster et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,145,612 (Cooper). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Bergman, Foster et al., and Cooper alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest or teach the claimed invention as recited in claim 7.

Claim 7 depends from claim 1 and, therefore, requires all of the limitations of claim 1. Cooper does not disclose or suggest a first coupling mechanism configured to couple to an MRI system and a second coupling mechanism configured to couple to a second imaging system. As discussed previously, Bergman and Foster et al. fail to disclose or suggest these limitations. Accordingly, a rejection of claim 7 based on Bergman, Foster et al., and Cooper cannot be properly maintained. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Also on page 4 of the Office Action, claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bergman in view of Foster et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,210,893 (Uosaki et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Bergman, Foster et al., and Uosaki et al. alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest, or teach the claimed invention as recited in claim 8.

Claim 8 depends from claims 7 and 1 and, therefore, requires all of the limitations of claim 1. As discussed previously, Bergman and Foster et al. fail to disclose or suggest these limitations. Uosaki et al. does not disclose or suggest a mobile transport, instead it discloses a fixed couch apparatus used with an MRI device. Accordingly, the rejection cannot be

properly maintained because Bergman, Foster et al., and Uosaki et al. fail to disclose, suggest, or teach the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 5 of the Office Action, claims 9-10, 12, 16-18, and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S. C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foster et al. in view of Bergman. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Foster et al. and Bergman alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest or teach the claimed invention as recited in claims 9-10, 12, 16-18, and 20-21.

Claims 9, 10, and 12 recite:

the first end is configured to be coupled to a magnetic resonance imaging device and the second end is configured to be coupled to an X-ray imaging device.

Claims 16-18 and 20-21 recite:

a patient support surface comprising a first end compatible with a first coupling arrangement on an imaging system and a second end compatible with a second coupling arrangement on a second imaging system

The Examiner admits that “Foster fails to disclose a coupling arrangement on first and second imaging system.” Indeed, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Foster et al. or Bergman for a first coupling mechanism configured to couple to an MRI system and a second coupling mechanism configured to couple to a second imaging system.

Nevertheless, the Examiner concludes:

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to employ a coupling arrangement on the imaging systems that is compatible with the coupling arrangement on the patient surface in order to dock the support surface to the imaging systems, such as an MRI and X-ray imaging systems.

Applicants respectfully disagrees with this conclusion.

There is no suggestion in Foster et al. to modify the coupling mechanisms in Foster et al. that dock the modular bed to a “rollable motorized transport module” and to a “rollable care cart module” to instead dock to two different imaging systems. Foster et al. does indicate that stretcher bed 10 can be used to transport the patient to and between an emergency department, imaging / x-ray scan, and operating room. (See Foster et al., Col. 5, lines 4-8.) However, stretcher bed 10 in Foster et al. is identified as a prior art transport bed (See Fig. 1, Foster et al.) without any coupling mechanisms. There is no suggestion that this prior art modular bed be modified to have two coupling mechanisms to attach to two different imaging systems.

There is no suggestion in Bergman to modify the patient transport table it describes from having one coupling mechanism to having two coupling mechanisms, one at each end of the table and one for a first imaging system and the other for a second imaging system.

Accordingly, a rejection of claims 9, 10, 12, 16-18, and 20-21 based on Foster et al. and Bergman cannot be properly maintained. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 6 of the Office Action, claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foster et al., in view of Bergman, and further in view of Cooper. On page 7 of the Office Action, claims 13-15 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foster et al. in view of Bergman in view of Bradcovich et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. Foster et al., Bergman, Cooper, and Bradcovich et al. alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest or teach the claimed invention as recited in claims 11, 13-15, and 19.

Claims 11, and 13-15 depend from claim 9 and, thus, include all of the limitations of claim 9, discussed above. Claim 19 recites:

a patient support surface comprising a first end compatible with a first coupling arrangement on an imaging system and a second end compatible with a second coupling arrangement on a second imaging system

As discussed previously, Foster et al., Bergman, Cooper, and Bradovich et al. all fail to disclose a first coupling mechanism configured to couple to an MRI system and a second coupling mechanism configured to couple to a second imaging system. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 11, 13-15, and 19 cannot be properly maintained. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner notes that claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office Action. Claim 3 has been amended as such.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

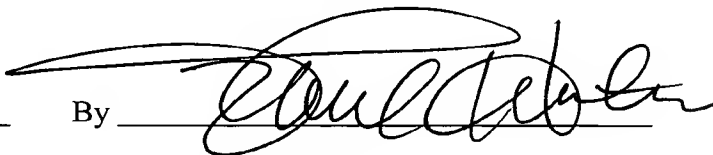
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 07-0845. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 07-0845. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 07-0845.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

June 25, 2003

By



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